



**OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL**
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

VIA EMAIL

September 19, 2013

Zack Sampson
MuckRock News
DEPT MR 6781
PO Box 55819
Boston, MA 02205-5819

Re: OIG-2013-00096

Dear Mr. Sampson:

This is in response to your letter dated September 17, 2013, which was received by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) on the same date. In your letter, you request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552:

1. Transcripts of interviews conducted with Department of Interior travel employees in the creation of the report "GovTrip Use and Monitoring by The U.S. Department of the Interior"; and
2. Any and all databases containing voucher testing data and charge card data that was used by the Office of the Inspector General in the creation of this report.

The OIG has assigned your FOIA request the number OIG-2013-00096. Please use this number in all future correspondence concerning your request. For purposes of OIG-2013-00096, you have been categorized as a "news media requester." As such, you are charged fees for document duplication, except that the first 100 pages of paper copies (or the equivalent cost thereof if the records are in some other form) will be provided without charge. The OIG will not charge such requesters for document search and review.

Under 43 C.F.R. § 2.15, the OIG is required to categorize each FOIA request based on the amount of time needed to process it. The four categories are: 1) Simple (1 -5 workdays); 2) Normal (6-20 workdays); 3) Complex (21-60 workdays); and 4) Exceptional/Voluminous (60+ workdays). Your request has been placed in the complex track.

In your letter, you also requested a fee waiver. However, you did not provide sufficient justification to qualify for a fee waiver under the Department of the Interior's (DOI) regulations, (43 C.F.R. § 2.45). The statutory requirement for granting a fee waiver is that release of the information must be in the public interest because it—

1. Is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations and activities of the Government; and
2. Is not primarily in your commercial interest.

To assist us in making a decision on your request for a fee waiver, we ask that you address the following as applicable. You must be specific in addressing the DOI's fee waiver criteria for each request you submit, regardless of whether you may have been granted a fee waiver previously.

1. Explain how the records you are seeking will be meaningfully informative with respect to the bureau's operations and activities. Your identity, vocation, qualifications, and expertise regarding the requested information may be relevant factors.
2. Explain how disclosure of the records will contribute to the understanding of the public at large or a reasonably broad audience as opposed to only enhancing your knowledge.
3. Explain how and to whom you intend to disseminate the information and how you intend to use the information to contribute to public understanding.
4. Explain how the release of the requested records will contribute significantly to public understanding. For example, is the information being disclosed new, does the information confirm or clarify data released previously, and is the information publicly available? Explain how disclosure will increase the level of public understanding that existed prior to disclosure.
5. Explain whether you have a commercial interest that would be furthered by disclosure and if so, whether the public interest in disclosure would be greater than any commercial interest you or your organization would have in the documents.

If you are still interested in obtaining these documents, please provide additional information to justify your fee waiver request or written assurance of your willingness to pay all fees or specify the maximum amount that you are willing to pay for the bureau to process your request. This will allow the OIG to begin processing your request for records while considering your fee waiver.

If the OIG grants your fee waiver request, we will not charge fees to the extent that it grants the waiver. If you have agreed to pay fees up to a particular amount, we will contact you when we have processed your request up to that amount before proceeding further. If we do not hear from you by **October 15, 2013**, the OIG will deny your fee waiver since it does not meet the DOI's fee waiver criteria. Also if we do not receive written assurance of what you are willing to pay fees, we will assume that you are no longer interested in this matter and will close the file on your request.

The OIG is unable to respond to your request within the time limits established by the FOIA (20-workday period or 30 workdays if an extension is taken), due to a backlog of requests. Please be assured, however, that your request is being handled as equitably as possible and that all documents that can be released will be made available at the earliest possible date. However, you may file an appeal for non-response any time after the statutory time limit for responding to your request has passed by writing to the following:

Office of the Solicitor
FOIA Appeals Officer
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
MS-6556
Washington, DC 20240
foia.appeals@sol.doi.gov

The FOIA Appeal Officer's facsimile number is 202-208-6677. Your appeal should be filed in accordance with the regulations set out in 43 C.F.R. §§ 2.57-2.64, a copy of which is enclosed.

However, should you need to contact me, my telephone number is 202-219-2069, and the email is foia@doioig.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Cristal J. Garcia', enclosed within a circular scribble.

Cristal J. Garcia
Government Information Specialist

Enclosures (2)